

The PEARLS of VERTUE; OR, THE WOMENS Deserved Praise

Being a Treatise of the many Vertues of the Female Sex, in divers Rare Examples taken from Scripture and

Sundry Histories, to Confute the Slanders and Calumnies some have cast upon that Happy Creature WOMAN.



When such a help was given Heaven was kind, and made that Paradiſe indeed, which elſe would have ſeemed a Solitude; and the better to let the world ſee a glimmering at leaſt of what, could it be ſhown in its full luſtre, would dazle the weak beholders eyes, which I ſhall comprize, by briefly ſetting forth in convincing Examples, true Female worth, drawn from the Volumns of undoubted Truth: And firſt of thoſe we find in Sacred Writ.

In Obedience, *Sarah* the Wife of *Abraham*, was wonderfully conſiderate; inſomuch that God reliev'd a more than ordinary Bleſſing for her in her Elder days.

In tender Love and Humility, *Rebecca* was Famous and found a ſuitable return of Bleſſings, in being favoured by the Higheſt.

Miriam the Siſter of *Moſes*, had the Spirit of Propheſie intuled into her Sacred breaſt.

In Chaſtity and Conſtancy, *Ruth* was no leſs Famous, nay, and in Piety and Obedience to Parents.

Debra was not only inſpired with Propheſie, but Manly Courage; ſo that the Heathens that had made all deſolate, felt her preſſing hand, till they were forced to pay for ſo much deſolation with their lives, and manure that Ground with Blood, which by their means had ſo long lain waſte.

Michal ſaved the life of *David* her Husband, when her enraged Father Hellishly inſpired, ſought unjuſtly to have ſeized his life. *Abigail* careful of her Chariſh and ungrateful Husband, by ſeaſonable Attonement, ſaved his and his Houſholds lives.

The *Sumptian* Widdow great in Faith, believed the Prophet, and by that belief, ſaved her ſelf and Darling Son from death, when Famine his grim Harſinger, had long time threatned them, and ſcattered many thouſand Starvelings round their Habitations.

The Queen of *Sheba* for Wiſdom, was wonderful, yet not leſs deſirous to improve the bleſſed ſcore ſhe had gained, made a tedious progreſs to the Court of the ſcattered King of *Iſrael*.

Heſter Moſt famous, in Circumventing at once the rage of Cruelty, and the rage of Cruelty, ſaved her Country from Captivity, and ſcattered many thouſand Starvelings round their Habitations.

power of Executing, which they thought was in their hands.

Heroic *Judith* to free deſtreſſed *Bethulia*, ventured on a daring Enterprize, at the hazard of Ravishment and Death, and with her ſingle Arm wrought a wonderful Deliverance, not only to that City, but to all the Neighbouring Countries; by taking off the Head of the vain-Glorious *Holofernes*, in the height of his Expectations, Drunk with Luſt & wine.

Theſe in the Old Teſtament are Recorded as Famous: Nor is the New wanting in Examples of wonderful Piety and Vertue, as appears in many Inſtances.

The wife of *Zacharias*, by a ſtedfaſt Faith, in her Old Age obtained a Son, and ſuch a one as proved the peculiar care of Heaven; one who was a Prophet, and ſuch a Prophet as exceeded all the Sons of Men; one who was ordained to prepare the way for the bleſſed *Meſſia*.

The bleſſed Virgin, favoured by the Higheſt, though a thing moſt ſtrange, and contrary to the courſe of Nature, Conceive the Holy one of *Iſrael*, God Incarnate, the bleſſed Original of all things, the Redeemer of loſt Man.

Anna the Prophetesſe for her Devoutneſs, Famous amongſt Women, had her Piety rewarded with the ſight of him who made her and all Created things.

The Charitable Woman that poured the Oyntment on our bleſſed Saviour, got ſuch eſteem thereby, that where-ever the ſound of the Goſpel came, or ſhall hereafter come, her Pious Deed ſhall be known.

The Siſters of *Lazarus* for Piety, remain Famous to all Poſterity; nor a leſs Holy Example were the Select Lady and her Children, who were ſo much eſteemed for their wonderful Piety, by the great Evangelist.

Theſe and more are with Commendations, Inroled in Sacred Characters, that they might remain as laſting Monuments of Vertue; then let not thoſe who wilfully ſhut their eyes, and obſtinately reſuſe to ſee thoſe Rays of perfection that ſhine in Woman-kind, imagine that their Detractions and Slanders caſt out againſt ſuch Noble Creatures, can at all prevail with the wife and judicious, to have a low eſteem of the Sex, which in all Ages has ſo well deſerved, and whoſe vertues have ever equal'd, if not many times exceeded thoſe of Men.

In Arts and Sciences, likewise their Ingenuity and greatneſs of Spirit has appeared, nay, and in many rare Inventions, but in Love and tender Goodneſs nothing can compare on the Earth with thoſe ſoft compassionate Creatures nor can the Greatneſs of mind in ſome be paralleld.

But not longer to Paraphraſe on ſo plenary a Subject, I ſhall proceed to the Exemplary Vertues of the Sex, as they are found in divers Hiſtories of many Countries, and Ages taking them upon the Credit of ſuch Authors as have been proved for their exactneſs and impartiality; for conſtant affection and unſullied Love the wife of *Ulyſſes* was a Famous pattern.

Pyramus and *Thisby* loath to be parted by Death (eſpecially the latter) fell upon one another.

Lucretia's Chaſtity violated, though much the ſign of the Golden Ball in *Pyrrhus's* Corner.

againſt her will, ſhe reſolved not long to outlive the Diſgrace, when having a while breathed out her ſence of ſhame and grief, ſhe with a fatal Ponyard pierced her tender breaſt, and waſhed thence all ſuſpition with her Flowing Blood.

The Beauteous *Hero* for her drowned Lover is no leſs Famous, for ſhe finding him dead upon the ſhoar, who ſo oft had for her ſake baſted the Fury of the Waves and wind, plunged her ſelf headlong from the Tower to graſp his Floating Corps, and periſhed in the relentless Waves.

Penelope the Chaſt Wife of *Ulyſſes*, could by no means be wrought upon to Marry a ſecond Husband, though her Husband was twenty years abſent, ten years at the Siege of *Troy*, and the like number wandring on the Ocean, but continued in her integrity till he returned home.

The Indian Women had ſo great a Love to their Husbands that they uſe if any man had two Wives (as comonly the Cuſtome is in that Country) to contend which of them ſhould be burnt with him when he was Dead, rejoicing in nothing more (as they fondly imagined) than by ſo doing they ſhould accompany him in the other World.

Enlalia a Virgin of *Portugal*, under the Hea then perſecution deſpiſing the honours of her Fathers Pallace, openly embraced the Chriſtian Faith and oppoſed the Heathen Idolatry; nor could ſhe by any torments be induced to renounce her profeſſion but periſhed therein till Death.

Elizabeth, Daughter to the King of *Hungary* in humility exceeded moſt, for leaving her Fathers Pallace, giving all ſhe had to the poor, unleſs a ſmall Modicum for her maintenance; ſhe wandered after the Death of her Husband into ſtrange Lands, Building upon her return an Hoſpital, and there choſe rather to ſpend her Life in looking after the Sick and Poor people than in a Kingly Pallace.

As for Chaſtity Women have been much applauded, but not beyond their Deſerts.

As Precedents of Charity, I ſhall name but two, and the Memories of thoſe perhaps unknown but to a few; viz. The Lady *Mary Rawſey* and Dame *Alice Owen*, who gave in their life time, and aſſign over to be given after their deceaſe to Pious and Charitable uſes, to the value of Five Thouſand pounds, as *Chriſts-Hoſpital*, the *Free-School* and *Alms-houſes* at *Iſlington* can teſtifie.

In Warlike Exploits and Rule, Women have not been wanting to expreſs themſelves.

Semerimis raiſed the Walls of *Babylon*, and by force obliged the Neighbouring Nations to pay her Tribute.

Queen *Boduo* fought againſt the *Romans*, and much oppoſed them in their Conqueſt of this Iſland.

The *Amazonian* Ladies were Famous for Proweſs: As likewiſe the *Camilla*, ſpoken of by *Virgil* in his *Aeneids*, who with a Troop of *Volſcan* Horſe, came to aid King *Turnus*.

Theſe and many more I now might name, Whoſe noble Vertues have acquired them Fame But this at preſent may ſufficiently prove, To gain Good Women true Eſteem and Love.

This may be Printed, R. P.